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The Role of Migration in the Urban Transition: A Demonstration From Albania

Mathias Lerch

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Abstract Although natural increase has been recognized as the main driver of postwar urban growth in developing countries, urban transition theory predicts a dominant role for population mobility in the early and late phases of the process. To account for this discrepancy between theory and empirical evidence, I demonstrate the complex role played by internal and international migration in the pattern of urban growth. Using a combination of indirect demographic estimations for postwar Albania, I show that the dominant contribution of natural increase from the 1960s to the 1990s was induced by a limited urban in-migration; this was due to the restrictions on leaving the countryside imposed under communist rule and, thereafter, to the redirection abroad of rural out-migrants. Although young adults in cities also engaged in international movements and significantly reduced their fertility, the indirect effects of rural-to-urban migration attenuated the fall in urban birth rates and postponed demographic aging. In-migrants swelled urban cohorts of reproductive age and delayed the urban fertility transition. Despite a high level of urban natural increase in Albania, I thus conclude that the role of population mobility dominated in the early and most recent phases of urban growth. The results also have implications for our understanding of demographic processes during the second urban transition in developing countries.

Keywords Urban transition · Components of urban growth · International migration · Post-communist transition · Albania

Introduction

The worldwide level of urbanization has increased at a fast pace since the end of the World War II, with more than one-half of the global population living in urban areas in

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M. Lerch (✉)
Institut d'Études Démographiques et du Parcours de Vie, Université de Genève, Uni Mail, 40, bvd Pont d'Arve, CH - 1211 Genève 4, Switzerland
e-mail: mathias.lerch@unige.ch

2009 (United Nations 2012). Although this transformation from a mainly rural to a predominantly urban society (referred to as "the urban transition") constitutes a potential for cultural and economic development, it has also brought about social and environmental challenges related to the pace of urban growth. The increase from 300 million urban inhabitants in developing countries in 1950 to 2.6 billion in 2010 (United Nations 2012) has outpaced the absorption capacity of labor markets and the development of infrastructure and social services, undermining public health and exacerbating the risks of environmental hazards. Given that the majority of future increments to the world population are expected to be concentrated in these cities, monitoring of the demographic sources of urban growth remains crucial in order to better meet population needs.

Urban natural increase—rather than rural-to-urban migration—has been the main driver of postwar urban growth in developing countries (Chen et al. 1998; Preston 1979). Still, urban transition theory predicts a dominant role for population mobility in the early and late phases of the process. To account for this discrepancy between theory and empirical evidence, I investigate the complex role played by migration. I consider internal and international movements (hereafter referred to as "out-/in-migration" and "emigration/immigration," respectively), and assess the extent to which growth contribution of urban natural increase depends on the demographic selectivity of migrants as well as on the changing destination of rural outflows. The focus on the spatial redistribution of population and reproductive potential is timely because developing countries are completing their first demographic transition (i.e., the sequential fall of death and birth rates), thus implying a low, if not negative, level of natural increase. The United Nations (2012) indeed has expected a large share of urban growth in the future to take place in China and Southeastern Asia, where fertility is already low. Because the demographic impact of international migration should increase in this global context, I propose a procedure of indirect estimation to account for this component in appraisals of urban transitions.

The different effects of migration are explored using cross-sectional data for developing countries and are demonstrated in a case study of Albania. This former communist country is an interesting setting because it has experienced not only contrasting migration regimes since 1944 but also marked population pressure alongside institutional and economic transformations, which are considered the main drivers of urban transition. Moreover, the post-communist period has witnessed a steep rise in urban growth, leading to congestion effects in urban labor markets, schooling, and medical facilities, as well as to health challenges related to environmental degradation (Pojani 2009). The present study assesses the underlying demographics to inform urban planning and development strategies.

Following an introduction to the case study context, I review demographic models of the urban transition and discuss the role of migration in order to anticipate urban growth patterns in Albania. I then analyze a combination of indirect demographic estimations of the sources of postwar urban growth, highlighting the changing patterns of population mobility according to the socioeconomic and institutional context. I show how the dominant contribution of natural increase from the 1960s to the 1990s was induced by restriction on rural-to-urban migration under communist rule and, thereafter, by its redirection abroad. A decomposition of the change in the urban crude birth rate (CBR) since 1989 provides further evidence that rural-to-urban migrants indirectly

sustained its level because they swelled urban cohorts of reproductive age and delayed the urban fertility transition. Although nonmigrants' lowest-low fertility and age-selective emigration have triggered demographic aging in cities, rural-to-urban migration has postponed the process. Despite a high level of urban natural increase in Albania, the analysis concludes that population mobility did indeed dominate urban growth in the early and also the recent period. The results have implications for our understanding of demographic processes during the second urban transition in developing countries.

The Albanian Context

Albania is an outlier in the puzzle of urbanization trends in Central and Eastern Europe (Hamilton et al. 2005; Mykhnenko and Turok 2007). While both total and urban populations stagnated in many countries under communist rule, Albania's demographic trajectory kept to the model observed in developing countries. In 1944, a predominantly rural society was dispersed across a mountainous territory. With the establishment of communist rule, major advances in public health led to a rapid decline in mortality, but fertility remained high until the 1960s. Demographic pressure was sustained in the Albanian countryside during the second half of the twentieth century, although the decline in the total fertility rate (TFR) was rapid—from 6.8 in 1965 to 3.0 in 1990 and to 2.3 in 2001 (Falkingham and Gjonca 2001; Gjonca et al. 2008). With the onset of birth postponement and the appearance of the one-child family model, the TFR reached subreplacement levels in the 2000s (INSTAT et al. 2010; Lerch 2013a).

The country experienced a discontinuous pace of economic development, which was related to institutional and political changes that also strongly affected population mobility. In the 1950s and 1960s, an accelerated process of communist modernization emphasized the development of heavy industry and transport infrastructure. Economic growth then stagnated in the 1970s but reversed in the 1980s. The severing of Albania's last two diplomatic relationships with foreign countries (the (then) USSR and China) led to a stall in technological transfers and a degradation of industrial equipment (Ditter and Gedeshi 2000).

During the communist period, Albanian society existed in complete autarchy under one of the most restrictive regimes in the world. The population was denied the right to move abroad. Internal movements were also strictly controlled from the mid-1960s onward via interregional allocation of the labor force in the context of industrial decentralization, rural retention, and a zero urban growth policy (Sjöberg 1992, 1994). These political measures coincided with a cultural revolution and institutional changes in agriculture (i.e., the completion of land collectivization). Restrictions on urbanward migration also aimed to increase agricultural production during the period of international isolation, with the stated goal of self-sufficiency (Borchert 1975). With only 36 % of the population living in urban areas in 1989, the country was among the least urbanized and most poor in Europe.

The post-communist privatization process was accompanied by a sharp rise in unemployment as former industries closed down and the public sector contracted (World Bank 2007). Rural institutions transformed with the per capita distribution of land, which atomized agricultural plots and undermined the widespread subsistence

agriculture. Social upheavals during the collapse of the regime and economy in 1991–1992, as well as a banking crisis in 1996–1997, exacerbated uncertainty. As Albania opened up to the world, people engaged in large-scale migration to find a new living in the neighboring countries of the European Union (Italy and Greece). Rural residents also moved *en masse* to domestic cities where social and economic change was concentrated (INSTAT 2004a; King and Vullnetari 2003). Although remittances played a crucial role in sustaining household consumption and in the country's fast-paced economic recovery since 1993, one-third of rural households still lived under the national poverty line in 2002 (INSTAT et al. 2009).

By contrast, the second transition decade saw a political and economic consolidation with high rates of gross domestic product (GDP) growth (7 % annually) and the development of the service sector (World Bank 2007). Despite a marked decline in rural poverty to 15 % in 2009 (INSTAT et al. 2009), unemployment remained high, especially among young mothers, who retreated from the labor market in large numbers following the end of compulsory participation under communist rule (INSTAT 2004b). The labor market situation was worse in secondary cities than in the capital (Tirana), which was the main beneficiary of Albania's new economic extraversion; underemployment remains widespread in rural areas. The trend in migration continued unabated: the number of Albanians abroad represented more than one-third of residents in 2011, and more than one-half of population living in cities has demonstrated a rapid pace toward urbanization (INSTAT 2012).

Demographic Models of Urban Transition and the Complex Role of Migration

The urban transition arises generally (albeit not necessarily, as shown in this case study) from urban population growth, which is driven by migration and natural increase (in addition to the reclassification of rural areas). The respective contribution of these components depends on the demographic and socioeconomic context. In this respect, Albania is an interesting case study because of the fast rate of completion of the first demographic transition alongside discontinuous institutional and economic change. Its contrasted migration regimes also provide a unique setting for demonstrating the role of population mobility. To anticipate urban growth patterns in Albania, I review demographic models, report international assessments, and discuss the complex effects of migration.

Demographic and Mobility Transition

Zelinsky (1971) provided a national model of population change during the historical process of urbanization in contemporary developed countries. According to his hypothesis of a mobility transition, an increase in migration parallels the course of the first demographic transition alongside modern economic development. From a demographic point of view, push factors of migration are emphasized (Davis 1963; Dyson 2011). During the demographic transition, the high level of natural population growth in rural areas exerts strains on resources, which are exacerbated by technological and institutional innovations in the agriculture sector (i.e., enclosure, selective inheritance), leading to a redundant labor force. Demographic pressure is relieved by fertility decline

and rural out-migration to domestic cities or foreign locations. The economic point of view emphasizes pull factors of migration related to regional inequalities during the takeoff phase of modern development. Opportunities in the expanding industrial or service sectors of cities attract potential migrants (Kelley and Williamson 1984; Todaro 1980), and the development of transport infrastructure facilitates mobility (Massey 1988; Ravenstein 1885). With a decline in birth rates in increasingly urbanized and developed societies, Zelinsky (1971) predicted a decline in rural out-migration alongside a rise in intracity and intercity movements as well as in immigration.

Demographic trends in Eastern Europe during communist rule conformed to Zelinsky's model, although the decline in the rural exodus was determined by state policies and administrative restrictions (Fuchs and Demko 1978). These institutional and economic changes were very marked in Albania and should have induced a discontinuous pace of rural exodus. Starting with a sustained level in the early phase of demographic transition and communist modernization, one would expect a later decline because of the imposed population immobility, the spatially balanced industrialization, and the subsequent economic stagnation. Social liberalization in 1990 and the process of privatization should have again pushed people from agriculture into cities, particularly in the last decade when the urban economy experienced sustained growth.

Differentiating the Demographic Transition in Rural and Urban Areas

Although Zelinsky's hypothesis was contextualized by the first demographic transition, it focused on the level, patterns, and destinations of migration, thus reflecting its empirical basis, which is constituted by the historical experience of Western Europe, where migration played a major role in urban growth. Cities were indeed demographic sinks until the mid-nineteenth century. Because death rates declined at a similar pace as the lagged trend in birth rates, the urban natural increase remained limited (Bairoch 1985; Davis 1965). The international diffusion of public health in developing countries, however, led to a faster decline in death rates than in birth rates. Urban natural increase was higher and consequently dominated urban growth (Bairoch 1985; Davis 1965; Preston 1979). To monitor these differences in growth patterns, the first demographic transition in rural and urban areas must be differentiated.

Vries' (1990) model decomposed the population growth of a closed country (i.e., without international migration) in its urban and rural sector. He distinguished three phases in the historical process of urbanization according to the relative importance in urban growth of rural-to-urban migration and urban natural increase (Dyson 2011; Vries 1990). In the first phase, populations are stabilized through a continuing inflow of migrants that compensates for high mortality. In the second phase, as sanitary improvements become effective in lowering death rates, urban growth is sustained by natural increase. In the third phase, the drop in urban death rates to below the rural level leads to higher urban than rural natural increase (assuming similar birth rates),[1] which consequently dominates urbanization.

Migration also exerts feedback effects on the pattern of urban growth that are mediated by the level of urbanization (Keyfitz 1980; Montgomery et al. 2003). The

[1] Although age-specific fertility is usually lower in urban areas than in rural ones, this is compensated by a lower dependency ratio of urban populations leading to similar crude birth rates.

primary role attributed to rural-to-urban migration in the early phase is related to the small size of cities. Sustained in-migration then accelerates urban growth, which hastens the dominance of natural increase in a larger population. Urban in-migration must also decline with the depopulation of rural areas. Because death rates were already low in the 1950s in Albania, urban natural increase should have progressively dominated urban growth over the course of urbanization.

However, fertility decline is particularly fostered by the dense social interaction and rapid structural changes in urban society, including the spatial separation of production and reproduction, rising living costs, and the increased value of education (Tabutin 2000). At the end of the first demographic transition, the urban TFR may therefore fall below the generational replacement level, and populations start to age. When natural increase becomes negative, urban growth must again be dominated by migration (Rogers 1982).

Urban Growth Patterns in Developing Countries and the Complex Role of Migration

Recent evidence for developing countries challenges urban transition theory. The role of urban natural increase in fact remains dominant in urban growth, even at relatively high and (not infrequently) low levels of urbanization (i.e., more than 60 % and less than 30 %; Chen et al. 1998). Admittedly, estimates are biased because of the establishment of migrants in the outskirts of cities as well as the difficulty of distinguishing rural reclassification from its demographic drivers. However, there is also a tendency to overlook the complexity in the dynamics and impacts of migration, which are potentially important in contexts of socioeconomic change and low fertility. More specifically, a demographic model of urban transition should include international migration and the interactions between growth components (Weeks 2011).

Although Berry and Kim (1994) highlighted the significance of international movements, congruent with Zelinsky's hypothesis, they have usually been ignored in contemporary assessments. The interactions between internal and international migration and natural increase also remain underappreciated, which may account for the discrepancy between theory and empirical evidence in the patterns of urban growth in developing countries. To demonstrate the role of population mobility, I reopen the model of urban growth to international movements and disaggregate it by migrant status to distinguish direct, indirect, and induced effects. These are discussed with reference to Fig. 1, in which a stylized evolution in the urban growth components is plotted according to the increasing level of urbanization (starting with the end of Fries' first phase).

Direct Effects of Migration

A declining rate of in-migration leads to a reversal in urban growth patterns, with natural increase starting to dominate (at point B in panel 1 of Fig. 1). In highly urbanized populations that have completed the first demographic transition, international migration becomes crucial for urban growth. With the onset of the second demographic transition in the 1960s in Europe, ideational changes manifested themselves in a diversification of family life courses, leading to postponed and strongly reduced fertility (Van de Kaa 1987). Given the aging and natural decline of populations,

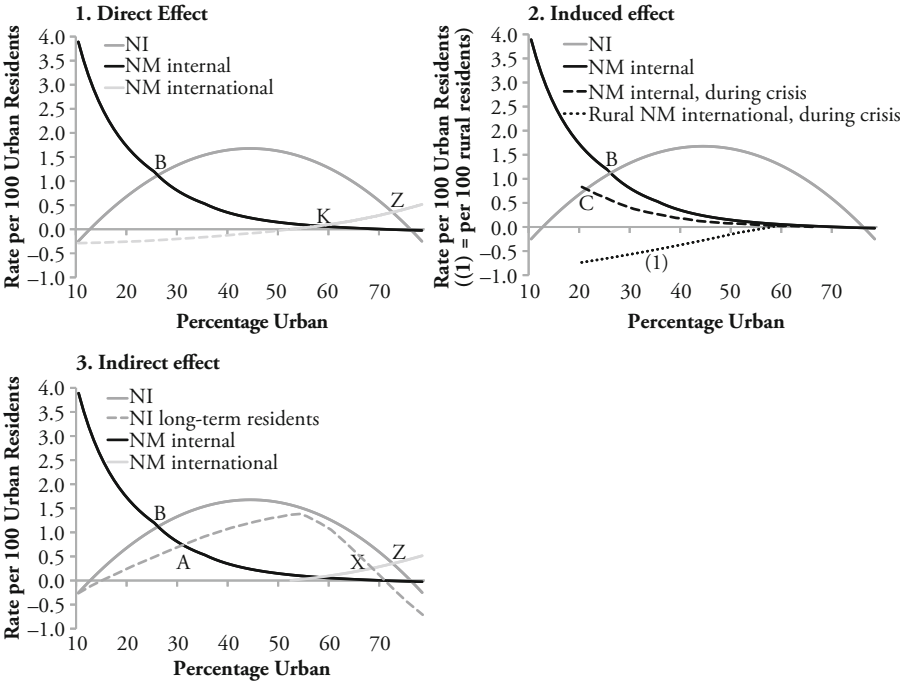

Fig. 1 Stylized patterns of urban growth and the effects of migration. NI = natural increase; NM = net migration; other capital letters stand for the intersection between lines, which indicate a change in the patterns of urban growth (see the text)

demographic stabilization depends on immigrants who may ultimately constitute the majority of residents in the future (Coleman 2006). Cities are particularly prone to this cultural diversification because they are the national entry gates for immigrants, while higher-class families looking for environmental amenities move to the urban periphery (Berry and Kim 1994). The pattern also characterizes large cities in the United States, where locational preferences among the elderly for smaller cities increasingly dominate internal migration because of the aging of population (Plane et al. 2005). This substitution of international for internal urban in-migration in the context of a shrinking rural reservoir of population has been referred to as the second urban transition of developed countries (Skeldon 2008). Its onset occurs at point K in panel 1 of Fig. 1, leading to the dominance of urban growth by net immigration at point Z.

International urban migration matters in less urbanized contexts as well. Until the nineteenth century, cities in the Americas and the Maghreb area grew mainly through colonial settlement (Bairoch 1985), which often originated in European cities (Baines 1985). In contemporary West Africa, international migration has sustained urban growth in more developed coastal areas during periods of economic development, whereas return flows have led to a leveling-off in times of crisis (Bocquier and Traoré 2000). Similarly, forced movements, transmigration, and the resettlement of Russians in the satellite states of the former Soviet Union increased urban populations. Return movements depleted them during the period of post-communist crisis and nation-state building (Mitchneck and Plane 1995; Mykhnenko and Turok 2007; Tammaru 2002). A

similar crisis-led emigration from Albanian cities should be expected to have taken place during the 1990s.

Induced Effects of Migration

The balance between international and cityward out-migration from rural areas exerts induced effects on the demographic pattern of urban growth. Evidence from nineteenth century Europe and contemporary developing countries indeed points to a substitutability of these out-flows. The dominance of one over the other has varied according to the relative economic attractiveness of their destinations, which has been determined by an alternation of their respective business cycles, especially when national economies were closely interlinked (Hatton and Williamson 1998; Massey 1988; Thomas 1973). Contemporary international migrants move within economic world regions from the so-called labor frontier—constituted by peripheral, small, and isolated economies—to regional economic centers (Skeldon 1997). As Albania constitutes the immediate labor frontier of the European Union, the penetration of social influences and foreign capital has increased awareness of and information about foreign destinations. This may have redirected the rural exodus abroad during the crisis in the 1990s.

Skeldon (2008) defined the substitution of international for internal rural exodus during economic crises and structural adjustments as the onset of the second urban transition in developing countries, leaving domestic cities bypassed by migration flows. Lower urban in-migration must induce a higher relative contribution of natural increase to urban growth, and may hasten the reversal in its demographic pattern (at point C rather than B in panel 2 of Fig. 1). Such an induced effect should also be expected to arise from the restrictions imposed on urbanward movement in many developing countries (UNFPA 2007), and, particularly, from the zero urban growth policy in communist Albania.

Indirect Effects of Migration

The importance of urban natural increase in developing countries' urban growth has also been related to the indirect demographic impact of migration (Martine 1972, 1975; Todaro 1984). The arrival of young adults inflates the level of natural increase because it augments the urban birth rate and lowers the death rate (Keyfitz and Philipov 1981; Montgomery et al. 2003; Rogers 1982); the inverse happens with age-selective emigration. These structural effects on urban growth can be expected to be particularly strong when pull factors—to which young people without family charges are more sensitive—play a significant role in the migrant decision-making process (Williamson 1988). In the early phases of the mobility transition, men also tend to move mainly abroad, whereas women constitute the majority of rural-to-urban migrants (Ravenstein 1885; Skeldon 1997). This gender selectivity can arise from various social dynamics (including cultural prescriptions, gendered household tasks, and low-skilled jobs in the urban economy) and should intensify the structural increase in urban birth rates.

Behavioral effects may delay the urban fertility transition. Although the level of childbearing of rural-to-urban migrants tends to be lower than that observed in the high-fertility settings from which they originate, and their family behaviors increasingly converge toward the urban standard with duration of residence, this process often takes

more than one generation (Brockerhoff 1998; Goldstein and Goldstein 1981; White et al. 1995). The redirection abroad of a share of rural exodus may further delay this adaptation, if domestic migrants are negatively selected in terms of socioeconomic status (SES), relative to those who can afford to move abroad. Poor residents do indeed have higher fertility in developing countries' cities (Montgomery et al. 2003).

The inflation of urban natural increase by in-migration hastens its dominance in the process of urban growth (from point A to B in panel 3 of Fig. 1). Conversely, immigration in developed countries' cities extends the period during which natural increase dominates urban growth (until point Z rather than X in panel 3). As the rural exodus of Albania mainly originated from the northeastern and southeastern highlands, where fertility was traditionally higher, behavioral effects should be significant. Structural effects can be expected to a lesser extent, particularly in the first decade of transition in the societal system, which motivated undifferentiated migration in other post-communist contexts (Mitchneck and Plane 1995).

Exploring the Role of Migration in Developing Countries' Urban Growth

An exploratory analysis of cross-country decennial estimates of the components of urban growth in the developing world for the 1960s to the 1980s (United Nations 2001, 2011)[2] supports the main hypotheses. There is a weak positive correlation between net international migration and urban growth ($r = .30$, statistically significant at 95 %). The data also point to a substitutability of international and internal rural out-migration as well as to its induced effect on the pattern of urban growth: international migration correlated weakly but negatively with net rural out-migration ($r = –.27$) and positively with the decennial decline in the urban ratio of net in-migration to natural increase ($r = .29$). Indirect demographic effects of population mobility on the level of urban reproduction are suggested by a negative correlation between urban in-migration and the decennial decline in natural increase ($r = –.47$).

Because the socioeconomic and institutional context strongly affects population mobility, a case study approach is more relevant. In the remainder of this article, I estimate urban growth patterns in Albania and assess the role of migration within and across the national border. The pace and direction of rural exodus is analyzed with reference to the changing context. I also estimate the demographic selection and reproductive contribution of migrants.

Direct and Induced Effects of Migration During Albania's Postwar Urban Transition

Decennial trends in Albania's urban transition can be documented from 1950 onward using indirect demographic estimation based on (often limited) statistical information from successive population censuses (see Online Resource 1). Table 1 shows urban

[2] Rates of urban natural increase and net rural-to-urban migration are indirect estimates (assuming closed countries; United Nations 2001). Because information on net international migration is available only at the national level (United Nations 2011), I assume that international migrants are selected proportionally to the urban–rural population ratio.

statistics and annual estimates of the demographic components of urban and rural population growth.

During Albania's isolation under communist rule, natural increase is distinguished from net rural-to-urban migration. The former component is observed from vital statistics (Drejtoria E Statistikes 1991), whereas the latter is indirectly estimated as the residual between intercensal natural projections of total urban populations and the observed number of inhabitants at the second census. The obtained migration stocks are reverse-projected to the midpoint of the census intervals to provide an estimate of the net flows (see Online Resource 1 for more details). Rates of urbanization are decomposed in the contributions of rural-to-urban migration and the rural-urban differences in natural increase (United Nations 1980:34).

A note of caution about the interpretation of these estimates is necessary because reclassification of rural areas is a confounding factor in the migration component. If urban growth was initially concentrated in Tirana and later on, in a few large cities (implying an expansion of their borders until 1965), the number of cities also increased (from 26 in 1945 to 67 in 1989). Many of the new towns were in fact large villages that were allocated an industry, a cooperative state farm, or administrative importance by the Central State, and thus fulfilled the criteria of the communist era's urban definition (i.e., historical towns and other industrial centers with more than 2,000 inhabitants[3]; Darques 2004; Sivignon 1975).

According to these estimates, one-fifth of the 1.2 million Albanians lived in urban areas in 1950 (Table 1). Urban and rural crude death rates were equally low (14 per thousand inhabitants), whereas the rural crude birth rate increased from 39 to 48 per thousand during the 1950s because of a pretransitional rise in fertility (see Central Directory of Statistics 1991; Falkingham and Gjonca 2001). Consequently, rural natural increase was high (3.1 % annually).

Still, population growth in rural areas was limited (1.5 %) because of large-scale rural-to-urban out-migration and reclassification (1.6 %). Apart from the attractive forces of communist modernization, this reflected to some extent a substitution of internal for international migration as a security valve for population pressure in the countryside. With the consolidation of the communist system and the sealing of national borders, rural residents who wanted to escape the impoverished context and the collectivization of agricultural land had no choice but to move into cities.

The high level of urban growth during the 1950s (7 %) was therefore mainly driven by net in-migration and reclassification, representing nearly twice the rate of natural increase (4.5 % and 2.3 %, respectively). The rural exodus also sharply increased the rate of urbanization. The number of urban residents doubled within a decade, from 250,000 in 1950 to 500,000 in 1960, representing 31 % of Albania's population.

The patterns of rural and urban growth changed in the 1960s. The growth rate of the rural population increased to 2.1 %, and the urban estimate dropped by more than one-half to 3.1 %. These trends were mainly attributable to a decline in rural-to-urban migration to one-half the level observed in the previous decade, which is evidence of the effectiveness of the control of internal movements. The abolition of social classes and the narrowing urban–rural gap in income and social services may have reduced

[3] Because Albania experienced a depopulation but no reclassification of urban and rural areas since the end of communist rule, the settlement size criteria was reduced to 400 inhabitants.

Table 1 Indicators of urbanization and demographic sources of urban and rural population growth and urbanization (annual average rates), intercensal periods, 1950–2011

	Census Years							Intercensal Periods					
	1950	1960	1969	1979	1989	2001	2011	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
Total Population	1,218,900	1,626,315	2,068,155	2,590,564	3,182,417	3,069,275	2,800,138						
Urban Population	249,875	502,531	686,627	870,430	1,137,562	1,294,196	1,498,508						
Percentage Urban	20.5	30.9	33.2	33.6	35.7	42.2	53.0						
Rural Population Dynamics													
Total growth (r)								0.015	0.021	0.022	0.019	–0.012	–0.026
Natural increase (NI)								0.031	0.032	0.025	0.022	0.012	—
Net rural-urban migration (NM)								–0.016	–0.007	–0.004	–0.006	–0.007	—
Net migration abroad (NMabr)								—	—	—	—	–0.018	—
NM / NI								–0.52	–0.22	–0.16	–0.28	–0.53	—
NMabr / NI								—	—	—	—	–1.41	—
Urban Population Dynamics													
Total growth (r)								0.070	0.031	0.024	0.030	0.011	0.012
Natural increase (NI)								0.023	0.020	0.016	0.015	0.011	—
Net rural-urban migration (NM)								0.045	0.014	0.008	0.011	0.011	—
Net migration abroad (NMabr)								—	—	—	—	–0.011	—
NM / NI								1.96	0.71	0.49	0.75	0.99	—
NMabr / NI								—	—	—	—	–1.01	—
Rate of Urbanization (rU / R)								0.055	0.012	0.002	0.009	0.023	0.046
Components of rU / R (%)													
Rural-urban differential in NI								–11.1	–105.7	–279.6	–57.6	–6.2	—
NM								111.1	205.7	379.6	157.6	78.7	—
Rural-urban differential in NM abroad								—	—	—	—	27.5	—

Sources: Drejtoria E Statistikes (1991), Central Directory of Statistics (1991), 2001 census, and INSTAT (2012).

incentives for mobility, although poverty persisted in the countryside (Sivignon 1975). This restrained rural exodus, as well as the doubling of the urban population over the previous decade, led to an inflation of the relative contribution of natural increase to urban growth. The growth pattern inversed, with natural increase out-weighing rural-to-urban migration (2 % and 1.4 %, respectively). Because the population in the countryside still outnumbered that of the cities, and its rate of natural increase remained high (3.2 %), the level of urbanization rose only slightly, to 33 % in 1969.

Following the onset of Albania's fertility transition, rural natural increase started to decline in the 1970s. With internal movements further curtailed by the regime, the induced effects related to lower urban in-migration intensified: the contribution of natural increase to urban growth was double that of migration. Because urban and rural growth rates were close, the level of urbanization stabilized.

During the last decade of communist rule, urbanization increased slightly to 36 % in 1989 because urban growth recovered and surpassed the rural estimate (3 % and 1.9 %, respectively). Two demographic phenomena underlie this trend reversal. As the communist system started to weaken, urban in-migration rebounded slightly (to 1.1 %), representing three-quarters of urban natural increase. The level of natural increase, by contrast, remained surprisingly stable in cities (1.5 %). Between 1960 and 1989, the number of urban residents more than doubled (from 0.5 million to 1.1 million).

In the 1990s, following the end of Albania's isolation, the decomposition of urban and rural population growth also takes into account the net effect of international migration. The availability of more disaggregated data (at the individual level) permits a more detailed analysis. Rural-to-urban migration by age and sex can now be observed from the 2001 census as the difference between urban in- and out-migrants; to identify migrants, the urban classification in 2001 was imputed to the individuals' reported place of residence in 1989 (see Online Resource 1). Net international migration, by contrast, is indirectly estimated by the life-table survival method (Siegel and Swanson 2004) as the residual between forward-projected urban and rural cohorts observed in 1989 and the enumerated populations in 2001, which was redistributed across the imputed urban and rural residence in 1989 (see Online Resource 1). Thus, the projected closed populations are compared with the observed number of survivors within Albania assuming no internal migration. The residual between total population growth and net internal and international migration cumulated over age and sex then provides an estimate of natural increase in urban and rural areas. The decomposition of the rate of urbanization considers net international migration as well.

Unlike the results for earlier periods, post-communist estimates of migration are not confounded by rural reclassification (which did not occur, according to the Albanian Institute of Statistics). Conversely, they miss the spatial extension of cities beyond their official borders. Were the strongly urbanized rural communes on the outskirts of cities to have been reclassified, less than two-thirds (instead of the official 42 %) of Albania's population would have been considered as urban in the 2001 census (Schuler et al. 2010).

Despite its young age structure, the population of Albania declined from 3.2 to 3.1 million in the first decade of political and economic transition (Table 1). Just as the sealing of international and internal borders strongly affected the components of urban growth under communist rule, so did the end of border control in 1990. Population mobility constituted the main demographic response to the post-communist transformations. Unlike in the 1950s, however, emigration was substituted for internal movements: the rural exodus was three times larger to foreign than to domestic destinations, representing respectively 1.8 % and 0.7 % of rural inhabitants in the 1990s. Tirana was the principal focus of internal movements and experienced high intercensal population growth (from 238,000 to 341,000 inhabitants, or 3 % annually; INSTAT 2004a). As the rural exodus bypassed secondary cities, urban primacy increased sharply; Tirana's population represented 127 % of the following three largest cities in the urban hierarchy of 2001, compared with 98 % in 1989 and 1979 (not shown). In the next section, I investigate whether the changing balance between internal and international migration did indeed mark the onset of the second urban transition in Albania.

Although emigration was lower from cities when compared with the countryside during the 1990s, it nonetheless represented 1.1 % annually. Because these migratory losses were only just compensated for by net rural-to-urban migration, the growth rate of the urban population in the 1990s was equal to the rate of natural increase (1.1 %), or one-third the estimate for the previous decade. Urban natural increase remained determinant for urban growth for two reasons. First, its level was sustained, which contrasted with a sharp decline in the rural estimate (from 2.2 % to 1.2 %, near the urban standard). The role of indirect effects of migration in this stability in urban birth rates is investigated in the next section. Second, the relative contribution of urban natural increase was inflated by limited urban in-migration. Unlike in the communist period, however, this was induced by the redirection abroad of a large share of the rural exodus.

Despite the declining rate of urban growth, the pace of urbanization increased sharply in the 1990s compared with the two previous decades; 42 % of the Albanian population lived in cities in 2001. This can be explained not only by rural-to-urban migration but also by international outflows that originated disproportionally from rural areas. Demographic losses to foreign countries actually led to a historical decline of the population in the Albanian countryside (by –1.2 %).

The decomposition of urban growth cannot be replicated for the most recent period because data from the last census in 2011 are not available. Principal results confirm a continuing trend in emigration, particularly from rural areas, which experienced substantive intercensal population losses (–2.6 % annually; INSTAT 2012). The urban population also continued to grow by an annual rate of 1.2 %, and the official level of urbanization crossed the 50 % level. Recent trends in urban reproduction, however, deviated from the relative stability observed in the previous decades: according to the census and survey estimates, the CBR declined from 15 to 9 per thousand urban inhabitants between 2000–2001 and 2005–2008 (see the following section). Despite the larger share of the Albanian population already living in urban areas, one would therefore expect natural increase to have played a smaller role in recent urban growth when compared to emigration and the domestic rural exodus.

Indirect Effects of Migration on Urban Natural Increase in Albania

Age and Sex Selectivity of Migration Flows During the 1990s

Given the emphasis put on economic crises and structural adjustments in the second urban transition of developing countries, a relevant indicator for its onset is the changing destination of labor migration. The demographic selectivity of migrants provides useful information on the underlying motives. Figure 2 presents annual sex- and age-specific migration rates for urban and rural areas during the 1990s (obtained as outlined in the previous section and in Online Resource 1). As seen in panel 1 of Fig. 2, emigration from the countryside was more selective than the departures to urban areas. Emigration was clearly most pronounced between ages 15 and 34 (with a peak of 3.3 % at ages 20–24). Men emigrated to a larger extent than women did. Rates then sharply declined to less than one-third, and sex differences gradually diminished at higher ages. Net rural out-migration, by contrast, evinced a flat age profile with two slight peaks between ages 20 and 34 and around retirement age. Men and women moved to a similar extent.

If one accepts that labor migration is more selective than amenity-seeking migration, Albanian cities indeed appear economically less attractive than foreign destinations given that they have been bypassed, especially by young male migrants. However, the internal movement of entire families, including dependents at young and old ages, can be related to the professional depletion and declining quality of rural services following the end of central planning. These moves were mainly to the capital because it was better provided with amenities and offered more employment opportunities than secondary cities.

A first question related to the structural effect of migration on the sustained level of urban natural increase during the 1990s is whether rural-to-urban movers replaced the young emigrants from cities. Panel 2 of Fig. 2 shows that although international migration was lower from cities than from the countryside, the age selection was stronger, especially for men. Emigration for men peaked between ages 15 and 24

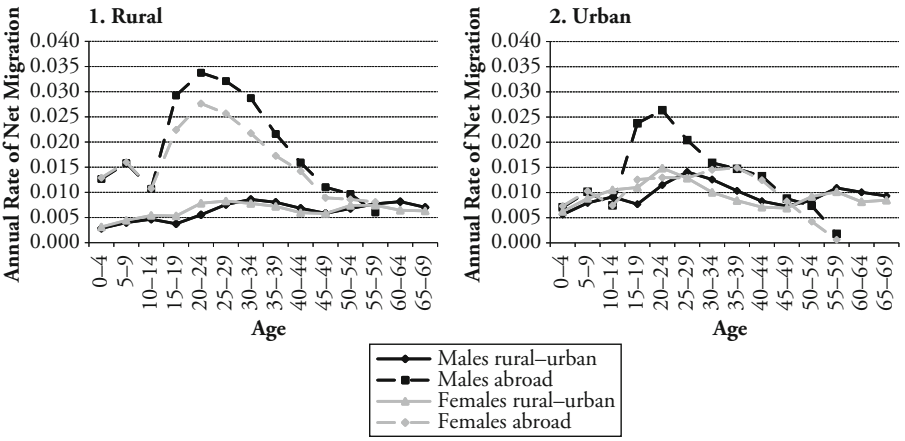

Fig. 2 Annual average age-specific net rural-to-urban and international migration rates of urban and rural populations by sex, Albania 1989–2001. *Sources:* Central Directory of Statistics (1991) and 2001 census

(at 2.5 %) and then declined to approximately one-half that level at ages 30–44. Among women, however, the propensity to migrate gradually increased with age, peaking between 30 and 44 years. This higher intensity and earlier peak in male compared with female emigration indicates male-dominated student and labor mobility followed by the reunification of families previously formed in Albania. International migration thus brought about an aging of the urban population. Rural-to-urban migration, by contrast, compensated for the bulk of the negative structural effects on urban birth rates by swelling the younger cohorts in cities, as evinced by the peak in in-migration rates at ages 20–29.

Also interesting is that unlike rural emigration, the increase in rural-to-urban migration started at younger ages for women compared with men. Two reasons can account for this sex difference. First, joint internal movements of young couples involve men at older ages than women because of the traditional age gap between spouses. Second, young women may move in the context of marriage migrations and join the husband's family in cities. These exogamous marriage traditions in the patrilocal society of Albania were instrumental in circumventing governmental restrictions on internal movements under communist rule (Sjöberg 1994). After the fall of the regime, the society experienced a return to traditionalism (Nixon 2009), and persistent traces of patriarchy promoted early marriage and large families (Lerch 2013b). Thus, traditional patterns of family formation related to mobility may have sustained in-migrants' fertility level in cities.

Reproductive Behavior of the Urban Population According to In-Migrant Status, 1989–2008

The resurgence of rural-to-urban migration in the 1980s and 1990s was accompanied not only by a sustained level of urban natural increase but also by a stalling urban fertility transition. The urban TFR remained at around 2.5 between 1979 and 1989, against a decline from 4.9 to 3.5 in rural areas (Frakulli-Dumani 1995). The subsequent reduction to 2 children per woman in cities in 2000–2001 was again lower than the decline in rural areas (to 2.5; Lerch et al. 2010). This relative stability of the urban TFR around the generational replacement level ended in 2006–2009, when women had only 1.3 children, on average (INSTAT et al. 2010).

To investigate the behavioral effects of rural-to-urban migration in this slowdown of the urban fertility transition, Table 2 provides indicators of the onset and level of childbearing for the urban population in 1989, as well as for the subsequent in-migrant and nonmigrant populations in 2000–2001 and 2005–2008. The percentages ever-married at ages 20–24, the total fertility rates (TFR), and the marital fertility rates (TMFR) are shown. The underlying age-specific information for 1989 is provided by Frakulli-Dumani (1995). Estimates for 2000–2001 are based on the own children method applied to the 2001 census (see Cho et al. 1986), whereas weighted birth histories from the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2008/2009 were used for 2005–2008 (see Online Resource 1).

Differences in the percentages ever-married and in the level of fertility according to post-1989 in-migrant status are statistically significant at the 95 % level unless stated otherwise. They confirm the pioneering role in Albania's fertility transition played by long-term urban residents: the decline of their TFR to lowest-low levels in 2005–2008

Table 2 Total fertility rate (TFR), marital fertility rate (TMFR), and percentage of the urban population ever-married at ages 20–24 according to post-1989 in-migrant status, Albania 1989, 2000–2001, 2005–2008

	1989	2000–2001		2005–2008	
	Total	Nonmigrants	In-Migrants	Nonmigrants	In-Migrants
TFR	2.2	1.7	2.7	1.2	2.0
Ever-Married, 20–24 (%)	49	42	68	34	70
TMFR	4.1	3.8	4.3	3.0	3.1
Share of Total (%)		77	23	76	24

Sources: Frakulli-Dumani (1995), 2001 census, and DHS 2008/2009.

(1.2) was due to both a decline in marital fertility and the progressive postponement of marriage (which is almost universal; out-of-wedlock births are negligible). The trend was initiated by Tirana's nonmigrant population, while secondary cities lagged behind (with TFRs of 1.0 and 1.6, respectively, in 2005–2008; not shown). Thus, the importance for fertility decline of structural changes and social diffusion in urban areas is confirmed. This contrasts with the higher fertility of post-1989 in-migrants, representing one-fourth of women of childbearing age. In 2000–2001, they had one child more than nonmigrants (i.e., 2.7) and even surpassed the urban TFR observed in 1989 by 0.5 children. This can be explained by a higher marital fertility compared with nonmigrants (4.3 vs. 3.8, respectively) and an earlier onset of motherhood (68 % of women had been married at age 20–24, vs. 42 %).

The post-1989 in-migrants' fertility level dropped near to the generational replacement level in 2005–2008 (i.e., 2.0). By contrast with the case of nonmigrants, this declining trend resulted essentially from family limitation (the difference in marital fertility almost vanished and lost its statistical significance). The constant share of ever-married among in-migrants aged 20–24 (70 % vs. 34 % among nonmigrants) shows that onset of motherhood continued to be early. Clearly, the post-1989 in-migration stock inflated the urban TFR closer to the level of generational replacement during the two decades of transition, although marital fertility converged more recently to the nonmigrants' level. Again, this process was initiated by in-migrants in Tirana, with those of other cities following the trend (not shown).

Decomposing the Indirect Effects of Migration on Urban Birth Rates

The CBR is given by the weighted sum of age-specific marital fertility rates, with the weights being the age-specific percentages of ever-married among women and the relative population structure by age and sex. Estimates of the urban CBR for post-1989 in-migrants and nonmigrants were thus obtained using the information underlying Table 2 in addition to the population structures (see Online Resource 1). Given the young age, early marriage, and high marital fertility of post-1989 in-migrants, their CBR was twice the level of nonmigrants in 2000–2001 and 2005–2008 (2.5 % and 1.7 % vs. 1.2 % and 0.7 %, respectively; see Table 3). In-migrants thus contributed one-

Table 3 Crude birth rate (CBR) of the urban population according to post-1989 in-migrant status and the decomposition of decennial changes according to structural and behavioral effects of migration, Albania 1989, 2000–2001, and 2005–2008

	1989	2000-2001				2005-2008			
	Total	Total	Nonmigrants	In-Migrants	% In-Migrants	Total	Nonmigrants	In-Migrants	% In-Migrants
Level of Urbanization (%)	36	42				~50			
Urban Reproduction, (per 1,000)									
Birth Rate (unweighted)	21	15	12	25	19	9	7	17	18
Difference 1989 with 2000–2001 and 2005–2008	*ref*	–6	–9	4		–12	–14	–4	
Birth Rate (pop-weighted)		15	10	5		9	6	3	
Decomposition of the Decline in Urban Crude Birth Rate Since 1989 by In-Migration Status: Structural and Behavioral Effects, in Population Weighted per Thousand Points									
Age–sex structure		–4	–4	0		–3	–4	1	
Marriage timing		0	–1	1		–2	–3	1	
Marital fertility		–3	–3	0		–8	–7	–1	
Interaction effects		1	1	0		3	3	0	

Sources: Central Directory of Statistics (1991), Frakulli-Dumani (1995), Census 2001, DHS 2008/2009, and LSMS 2008.

third of the urban CBR despite the fact that they represented less than one-fifth of the urban population.

The effects of migration on the urban age–sex structure can be considered to be temporary, whereas the behavioral influences on the urban fertility transition may be more long lasting. An assessment of their respective contributions is important, therefore, for monitoring urban demography. I decomposed the decline of the urban CBR between 1989 and 2000–2001 and 2005–2008 into the effects of the changing age–sex structure, marriage behavior, and marital fertility of nonmigrants and in-migrants, respectively, using an adapted version of Yi et al.'s (1991) method (see Online Resource 1). Results are shown in Table 3.

Between 1989 and 2000–2001, the decline in the urban CBR from 21 to 15 births per thousand inhabitants was mainly due to the aging of the nonmigrant population, which was driven by selective emigration: compared with the urban population 12 years earlier, women of reproductive age in 2000–2001 were underrepresented, depressing the CBR by 4 points. This negative effect was intensified by nonmigrants' marriage postponement and lower marital fertility (depressing the CBR by 1 and 3 points, respectively). Earlier marriages among post-1989 in-migrants, by contrast, inflated the urban CBR by 1 point. This was further sustained by their similarly young population structure and high marital fertility when compared with the urban population in 1989.

The urban CBR continued to decline until 2005–2008, to 9 per thousand inhabitants, mainly because marriage was further postponed, and marital fertility was reduced among nonmigrants. This depressed the CBR by 3 and 7 points, respectively, compared with the 1989 estimate. The continuing emigration of young urban dwellers also exacerbated the negative structural effects. Post-1989 in-migrants, by contrast, inflated the CBR by 2 points not only because they married early but also because of increasing selection among young women (compared with the arrival cohorts of the 1990s). However, the recent diffusion of birth limitation among in-migrants started to contribute to the decline in the birth rate (by 1 point).

To sum, the demographic process of urbanization in Albania was more complex than the conventional dichotomy between net rural-to-urban migration and urban natural increase. Emigration led to an annual decline of 1.1 % in the urban population during the 1990s (Table 1), and its demographic selectivity depressed the urban birth rate by 0.4 percentage points in 2000–2001 (Table 3). Net rural-to-urban migration compensated for these effects by increasing the number of urban residents by 1.1 % and contributing 0.5 percentage points to the urban birth rate. Abstracting from mortality, the indirect effect of population mobility on urban growth was approximately one-half of its direct effect after only one decade of freedom of movement in Albania.

Discussion and Conclusion

Later assessments of urban growth patterns in developing countries have established a dominant role for urban natural increase, even more so in the recent past when a majority of the world population already lived in cities (UNFPA 2007). Yet, urban transition theory predicts a dominant role for population mobility in the early and late phases of the process because of high urban mortality and a low level of urbanization,

and the completion of the urban fertility transition, respectively. The empirical paradox, I argue, may be resolved by opening the urban growth model to international migration and by its disaggregation to account for the reproductive contribution of migrants. I combine the use of microdata with indirect demographic estimation and decomposition methods to assess direct, induced, and indirect effects of both internal and international movements on the patterns of urban growth in Albania.

Albania has undergone a differentiated pace of urbanization since the end of World War II. The process first accelerated in a period of rapid communist modernization and unprecedented population growth in the 1950s. Because population movements were constrained within sealed national borders, rural-to-urban migration and reclassification were important in international comparison and represented the main sources of the marked urban growth. With the regime's subsequent retention of residents in the countryside, urbanization stalled. During the post-communist crisis, the process caught up at a fast pace despite a rise in urban emigration. Given the renewed freedom of movement, the transformation in rural institutions, and the structural changes in the economy, the rate of rural exodus again surpassed most experiences in the developing world. The release of the demographic pressure that had accumulated over the preceding three decades actually led to depopulation in the countryside. Yet, Albania shifted from its first, restrained urban transition into its second because the (male) labor force component of rural outflows was redirected to more attractive destinations abroad to sustain a living for the families left behind.

Congruent with international evidence, the results for the 1960s to the 1990s highlight the sustained level of urban natural increase and its significant contribution to urban growth. However, migration contributed to this trend in two ways. Restriction of rural exodus under communist rule and its subsequent redirection abroad during the economic and political transition limited urban in-migration. This induced a higher relative contribution of urban natural increase to urban growth, which hastened the reversal in demographic patterns. However, reduced and postponed childbearing consistently diffused down the urban hierarchy, leading to lowest-low levels of the TFR among long-term residents. Combined with the selective emigration of young adults, this accelerated the pace of demographic aging in cities. Rural-to-urban migrants actually sustained indirectly the level of urban natural increase. Although young adults were less selected among these migrants than among those who ventured abroad (especially when domestic pull factors were weak in the 1990s), they swelled the depleted urban cohorts at childbearing ages. The earlier onset and higher level of in-migrant fertility also slowed the pace of the urban fertility transition. Thus, rural-to-urban migration postponed the onset of advanced aging in cities.

Rural socialization and marriage migrations can be seen to explain migrants' birth differential compared with the urban standard (Lerch 2013c), and these behavioral effects appear to be related to the gender selection of internal and international migration in the context of a patriarchal culture and the post-communist crisis. Males were attributed a breadwinner role abroad, whereas women retreated from the labor market and assumed the responsibility of family maintenance in the new social and economic centers of Albania. However, to further postpone the aging of urban populations, a continuing inflow of young and recently married migrants is necessary because of their recent and partial adoption of urban fertility patterns (i.e., birth limitation without postponement). More evidence on this diversification of the urban

fertility transition would contribute to easier prediction of urban demography in Albania. Income inequality has risen along with development, and the economic geography of internal movements has pointed to an urbanization of poverty (Zezza et al. 2005). As in other world regions, the diversification in childbearing patterns may indicate the coexistence of two parallel paths of urban fertility transition, such as the emergence of new family models among affluent populations and birth limitations among the deprived (Basu 1986; Cosio-Zavala 1995).

An appraisal of the components of urban growth in Albania must acknowledge the limitations of indirect demographic estimation (see also Online Resource 1). Rural-to-urban migration may have been overestimated during communist rule because of the crude method imposed by the limited data, and the impossibility of distinguishing migration from rural reclassification. Still, this is unlikely to explain the collapse in migration in the 1960s and its sharp recovery in the 1990s. In the post-communist period, the complex role of population mobility was even underestimated because the significant sprawl of urban growth beyond unchanged city borders was not accounted for. Moreover, I have not investigated the behavioral effects of selective urban emigration, which may have left more-fertile populations behind, nor have I discussed the influence of emigrants and remittances on socioeconomic change in Albania, including on reproductive and migratory behavior and the development of urban housing. I can therefore conclude that population mobility was indeed the main source of the early and the most recent urban growth. The sustained importance of natural increase has been explained by variations in socioeconomic development and migration regimes, depressing or redirecting abroad the rural exodus, as well as by the demographic selection of migrants, which increases their reproductive contribution to urban growth.

Beyond Albanian demography, lessons drawn from this case study have two implications for the demographic and economic processes of urbanization in developing countries. First, the substitutability of internal and international rural out-migration highlights the extent to which administrative barriers to cityward movements only postpone or redirect abroad the release of demographic pressure in the countryside. Moreover, rural emigration increases the concentration of human activity in urban areas, which allows a more effective allocation of resources to provide public services, increase well-being, and sustain economic growth.

Second, the role of migration in the postponement of demographic aging in Albania's cities was in fact predicted by the second urban transition model for high-income countries—with the notable difference that immigrants there originated from abroad (Skeldon 2008). This similarity in demographic challenges and behaviors in urban Albania can be explained by the communist suppression of the urbanization process while the fertility transition progressed. It also highlights the importance of international social interaction for the diffusion of low fertility (Bongaarts and Watkins 1996), particularly in cities. Thus, the paths of the second urban transition attributed, respectively, to more- and less-developed countries are not mutually exclusive in a globalized world. When combined, they may represent an opportunity for economic development: current crisis-driven demographic pressure in the countryside is released abroad, preventing an urban explosion, whereas the cities' demographic potential for future economic growth is ensured through a rural-to-urban redistribution of reproduction.

Moving from a fast onset of urbanization to autarchy under dictatorship, thereafter followed by liberation and exposure to the global world, Albania is a demonstrative example for the role played by migration in the urban transition. However, the cross-country exploration of urban growth patterns suggests that similar direct, induced, and indirect effects of population mobility may be observed in other countries—particularly where urbanization is caught up in the context of low fertility. In China and South-eastern Asia, assessments and projections of urban growth in the 1990s and beyond have indeed showed a dominant role for rural-to-urban migration (Guest 2009; Liang et al. 2008). Considering the economic prospects for this world region, the contribution of international flows may increase significantly. Chinese women also engaged in marriage migrations to resettle in economically more developed areas (Davin 2008), while immigrants may become crucial to balance the distorted population sex-ratios brought about by a son-preferred pattern of childbearing. Thus, the indirect demographic effects of population movements are likely to postpone the dependency burden that these cities will have to cope with and may set the demographic conditions for a consolidation of economic development in the future.

This analysis has confirmed the importance of international movements and the interactions between migration and fertility for an increased understanding of urban growth. Approximations of net rural-to-urban migration based on urban–rural growth differences can thus be misleading because of differential rates of emigration and the indirect effects on natural increase. Similarly, the conventional decomposition of urban growth into rural-to-urban migration and natural increase confound the complex effects of population movements in the estimates of the latter, especially when indirectly obtained. The main conclusion is therefore a need for more disaggregation in assessments of national urban transitions. Accounting for different components of urban growth, including their interactions, should help in monitoring urban demography in a mainly urban world that will soon complete its first demographic transition.

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